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Contact: Adriane Barnes, (501) 516-6255, adriane.barnes@arkansas.gov

Arkansas Farmers Market Promotion Grants Awarded to 21 Farmers Markets across 16 Counties

STATEWIDE, ARK. – The Arkansas Agriculture Department (AAD) and Farm Credit are pleased to announce 21 recipients of the new Arkansas Farmers Market Promotion Program. Grant funds were generously made available by Farm Credit, and established as a program by both agencies to help farmers market organizations throughout the state fund promotional items designed to build awareness of farmers market locations and offerings.

Arkansas Farmers Market Promotion Grant recipients from 16 Arkansas counties include:

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| • Arkansas County Farmers Market | Arkansas County |
| • Arkansas Local Food Network | Pulaski County |
| • Bentonville Farmers Market | Benton County |
| • Dogtown Farmers Market | Pulaski County |
| • Downtown Blytheville Farmers Market | Mississippi County |
| • Downtown Newport Farmers Market | Jackson County |
| • Fort Smith Farmers Market | Sebastian County |
| • Gateway Farmers Market | Miller County |
| • Gunn Barn Farmers Market | Cleburne County |
| • Harrison Farmers Market | Newton County |
| • Hillcrest Farmers Market | Pulaski County |
| • Howard County Farmers Market | Howard County |
| • Paragould Farmers Market | Greene County |
| • Pope County Farmers Market | Pope County |
| • Rogers Farmers Market | Benton County |
| • Rural Mountain Producers Exchange
(Fayetteville Farmers Market) | Washington County |
| • Searcy County Farmers Market | Searcy County |
| • Siloam Springs Farmers Market | Benton County |
| • Springdale Farmers Market | Washington County |
| • The Dirty Farmers Community Market | Van Buren County |
| • White Street Saturday Market | Carroll County |

“We hope that these new cost share grants will help make a rich connection between the producers and consumers in communities across Arkansas,” said Arkansas Secretary of Agriculture Wes Ward.

“Farm Credit is proud to support this initiative - funding local opportunities for producers and consumers to create sustainable, thriving markets,” said Glen Manchester, president and CEO of Farm Credit of Western Arkansas.

To be eligible for grant participation, recipients met the following criteria: 1) The farmers market location must be a place where a farmer may offer for sale the produce of his/her farm at least weekly during the months of May, June, July, and August; and 2) The farmers market must be governed by an organized body in freely obtainable bylaws or market guidelines; and 3) On any given market day, the farmers market must have at least 50% farmer-vendors.

With \$3.2 billion in assets, AgHeritage Farm Credit Services, Delta Agricultural Credit Association, Farm Credit Midsouth and Farm Credit of Western Arkansas support rural communities and agriculture across the state with reliable, consistent credit and financial services, today and tomorrow. The Farm Credit associations in Arkansas are owned by 10,750 customers. As a financial cooperative, Farm Credit customer-owners have a voice and vote in the associations' governance and share in their cooperatives' financial success through cooperative returns, which total \$168.5 million since 1997.

The Farm Credit System additionally supports the rural communities of Arkansas through CoBank agribusiness cooperative loans which provide essential infrastructure services. Combined, Farm Credit organizations provide more than \$4 billion in loans, leases and related services in Arkansas and returned \$25.8 million to their customer-owners this year.

The Arkansas Agriculture Department is dedicated to the development and implementation of policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture and forestry to keep its farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation.

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The Arkansas Agriculture Department offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.